

National Football Museum acquires prize-winning Toynbee artwork thanks to National Lottery grant

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The National Football Museum has acquired an exciting new painting to add to its collection of 20th century art, thanks to National Lottery players.

Mid-week practice at Stamford Bridge by Lawrence Toynbee was originally submitted as part of the Football and the Fine Arts exhibition in 1953, where it won one of the main prizes alongside contemporary L S Lowry's *Going to the Match*.

The painting, one of two made at the same time by the artist, has been purchased by the National Football Museum with help from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Art Fund and the Arts Council England / V&A Purchase Grant Fund.

The artist Lawrence Toynbee drew upon his own experience as a sportsman to create his scenes from British sporting life, and I'm sure the painting will stir memories in the museum's many fans and visitors."

The other, *Chelsea v Spurs at Stamford Bridge*, was reportedly purchased at auction in 2012 by Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich.

Lawrence Toynbee's work can be found in many museums and galleries across the country. A keen sportsman, he drew upon his knowledge and affection for sport when painting his subjects.

Emma Hadley, Art Research Officer at the National Football Museum, said: "We're delighted to have been able to acquire this lovely work of art which depicts footballers in training. Lowry's *Going to the Match* is probably the most well-known of the paintings submitted at the 1953 Football and the Fine Arts exhibition and is often quoted as being the winner of the exhibition. However, Toynbee's work was rated equally highly by the panel. We're extremely grateful to The National Lottery Heritage Fund, The Art Fund and the ACE/V&A Purchase Grant Fund for their help in allowing us to purchase this significant artwork."

Inspiring people of all ages

Stephen Deuchar, director of Art Fund, said: "This evocative view of Chelsea FC's Stamford Bridge ground is a great addition to the National Football Museum's collection. The artist Lawrence Toynbee drew upon his own experience as a sportsman to create his scenes from British sporting life, and I'm sure the painting will stir memories in the museum's many fans and visitors."

Mid-week practice at Stamford Bridge will be on display as part of the National Football Museum's Football Is Art exhibition, which opens on Friday 5 April 2019.